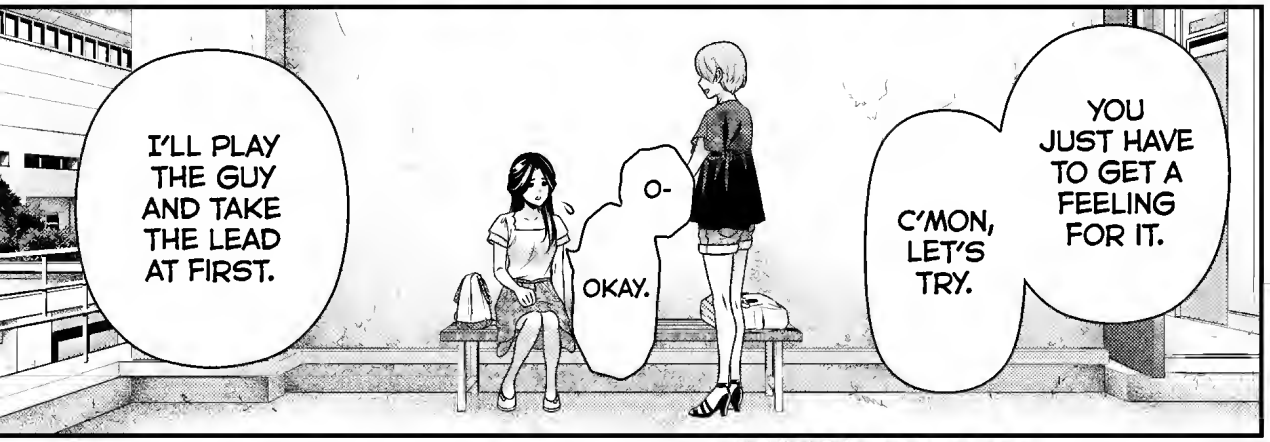
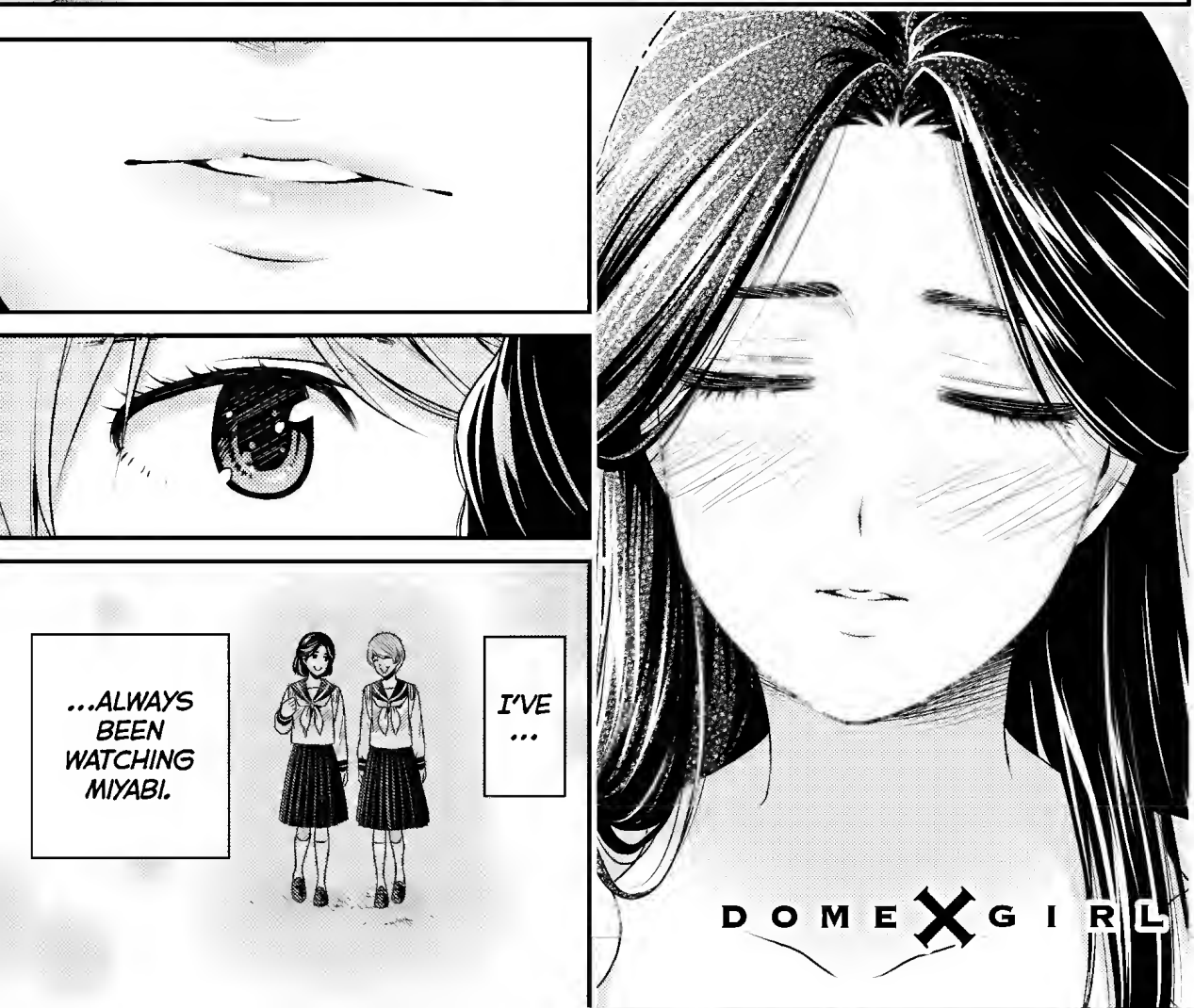
KODANSHA COMICS

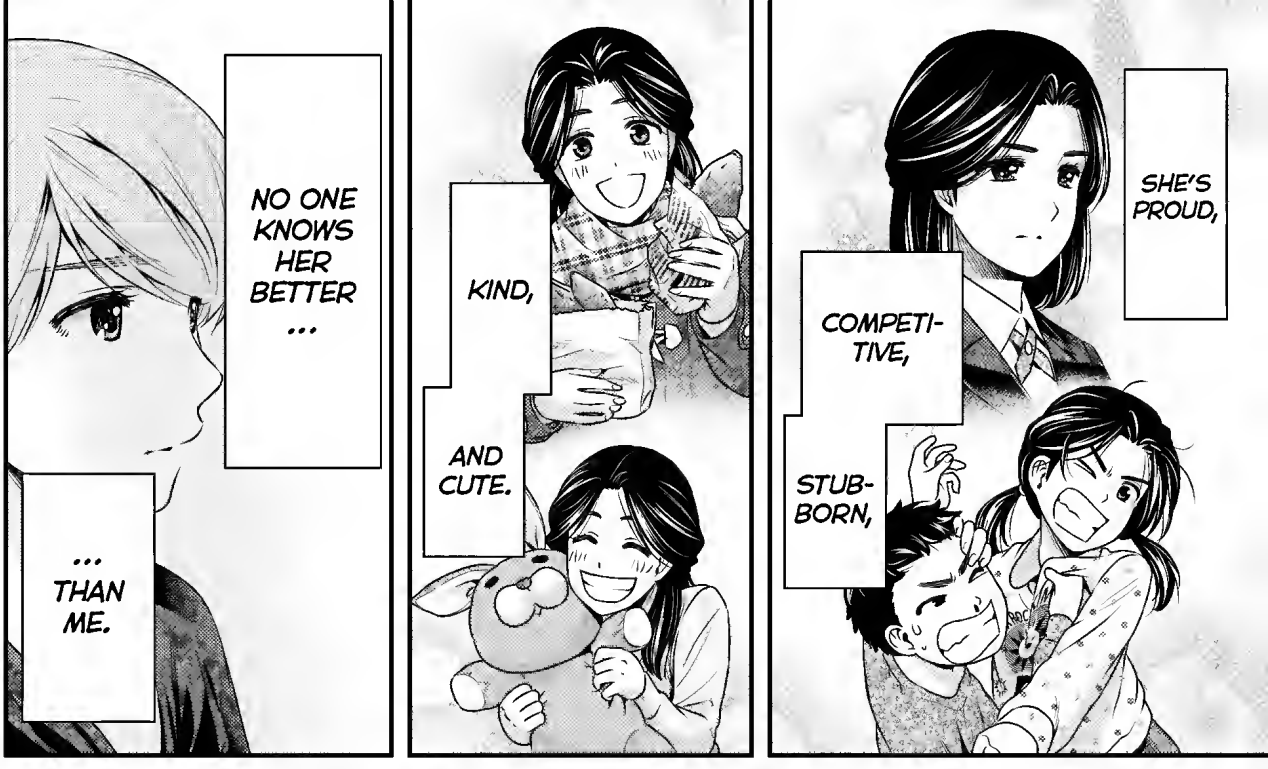
CHAPTER 165

KEI SASUGA

E-
EVEN JUST TO IMPROVE MY ACT-ING,
I CAN'T ASK YOU TO DO THAT, YUKA.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.
I LOVE YOUR ACTING, SO I WANNA HELP HOWEVER I CAN.
I TOLD YOU THAT, RIGHT?

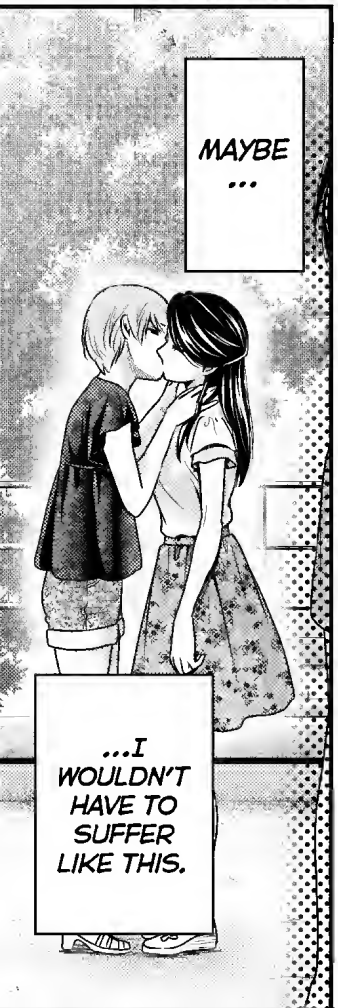

YOU JUST HAVE TO GET A FEELING FOR IT.
C'MON, LET'S TRY.
O-
OKAY.
I'LL PLAY THE GUY AND TAKE THE LEAD AT FIRST.

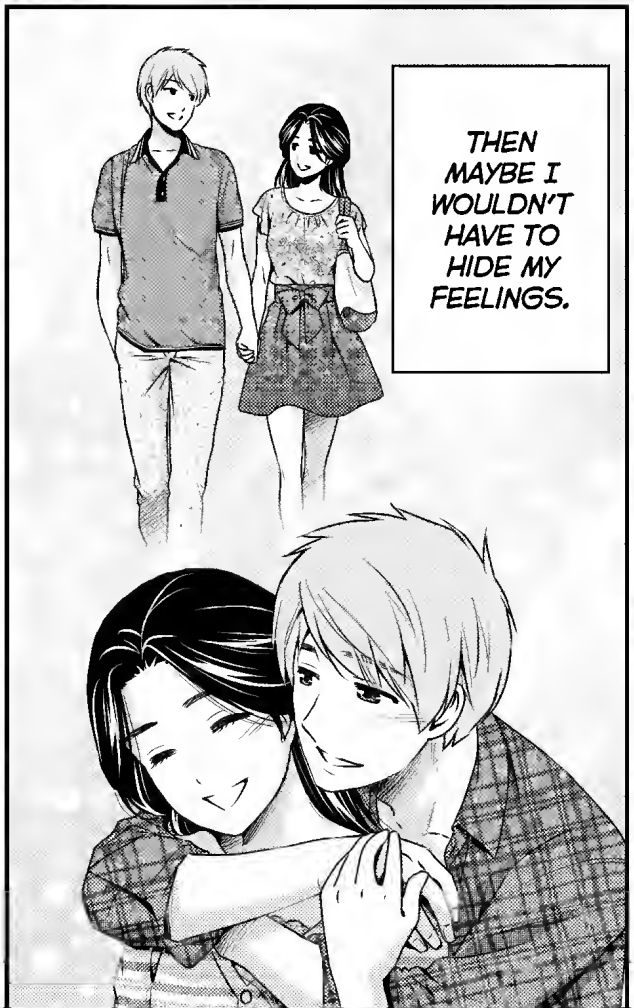

I'VE ...
...ALWAYS BEEN WATCHING MIYABI.
DOME GIRL


NO ONE KNOWS HER BETTER ...
... THAN ME.
KIND, AND CUTE.
SHE'S PROUD, COMPETI-TIVE, STUB-BORN,

AND YET ...

...I'VE NEVER SEEN HER...
...LOOK AT SOME-ONE LIKE THAT BEFORE.


MAYBE ...
...I WOULDN'T HAVE TO SUFFER LIKE THIS.


THEN MAYBE I WOULDN'T HAVE TO HIDE MY FEELINGS.

IF ONLY ...
...I WERE A MAN.

CHAPTER 165: IF IT'S HOPELESS, THEN...

KEI SASUGA

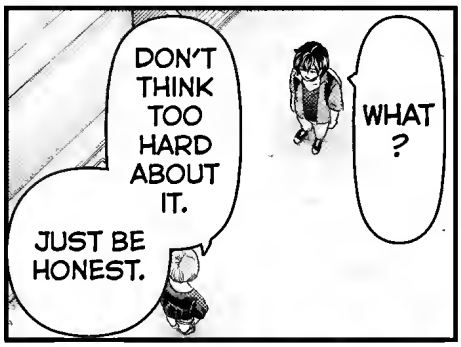
FU-
FUJII-KUN!
WAIT.
UM...
FWIP
THIS ISN'T ...
... WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.
WE WEREN'T BEING SERIOUS.
DRIP
IT WAS JUST PRAC-TICE FOR...
...
SERI...
...ZAWA.

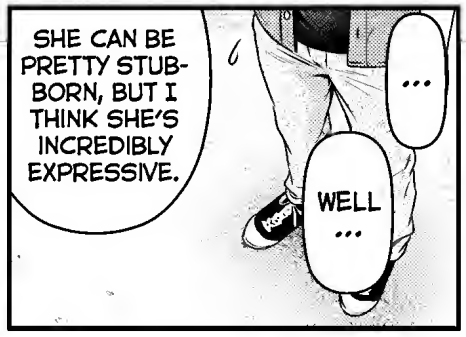
SERI ...!
...
KYUDA
SHU!!

IT WAS DIFFERENT FOR ME.
O-OHH!
GOTCHA. I WAS PRETTY SUR-
THAT'S WHAT MIYABI WOULD SAY, ANYWAY.
WE WERE PRAC-TICING ...
...FOR A ROLE IN THE NEXT PLAY.
MIYABI HEARD SOMEONE SAYING THAT IT SEEMS LIKE SHE'S NEVER KISSED ANYONE BEFORE.

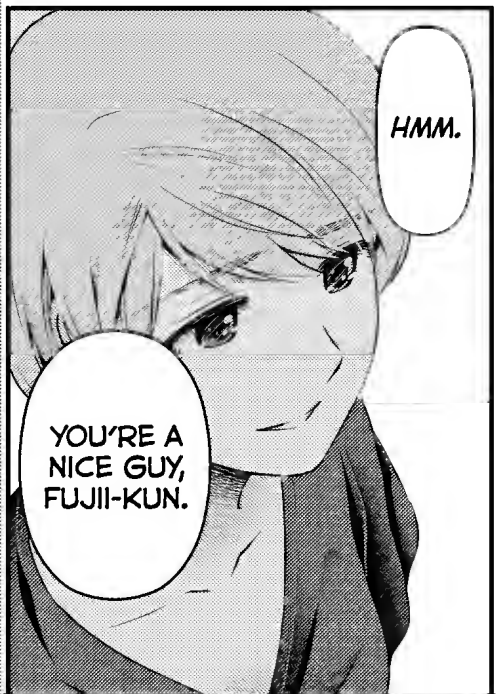
HUH?
HEY, FUJII-KUN.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MIYABI?

I RESPECT HER A LOT.
SHE'S AN IRREPLACE-ABLE TEAMMATE.


WHAT?
DON'T THINK TOO HARD ABOUT IT.
JUST BE HONEST.


...
WELL...
SHE CAN BE PRETTY STUB-BORN, BUT I THINK SHE'S INCREDIBLY EXPRESSIVE.

WELL, TO ME...
...MIYABI WAS MORE THAN JUST A FRIEND.

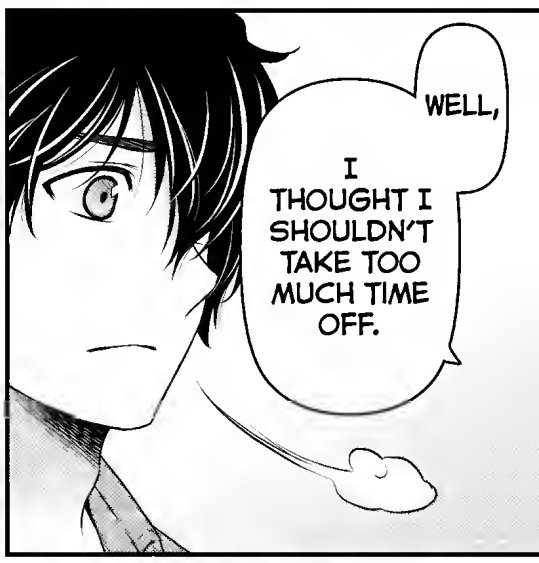

HMM.
YOU'RE A NICE GUY, FUJII-KUN.

BUT...LOOKS LIKE I MIGHT HAVE TO GIVE UP ON ALL THAT.
THAT JUST DROVE THE FINAL NAIL IN MY COFFIN.
...!
HUH?
GOD, YOU'RE DENSE.
I MEAN I FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT HER THAT YOU DO ABOUT YOUR GIRL-FRIEND.
MORE?
I WISH...
...WE COULD TRADE PLACES.
HER TEARS TOLD ME...
...EVERY-THING I NEED TO KNOW.
IF ONLY I COULD'VE...
...BEEN LIKE YOU.

フォォ
FWOO
カチャ
CHACK
I'M BACK!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, RUI?
シャ
SHIV
フル
SHIV
フル
SHIV
フル

I'M TRYING TO GET BACK INTO THE SWING OF THINGS A LITTLE.
I'VE TRIED A FEW TIMES SINCE LUNCH, BUT...
BUT ...
...MY HAND WON'T STOP SHAKING.
YOU SHOULDN'T PRACTICE BY YOURSELF.
WHAT IF YOU GET HURT AGAIN?

I'LL COME HOME EARLY IF YOU DO.


WELL, I THOUGHT I SHOULDN'T TAKE TOO MUCH TIME OFF.

ジャーーー
FSSSSS
THEN AT LEAST TOSS ME A MESSAGE ON LINE.

N-
NAT-SUO ...
I'M IN BROTHER MODE NOW,
OKAY ?
DON'T WORRY.
EASY ...
JUST TAKE IT SLOW.
SHN
K
I DID IT!
...!
SHNK
SHNK
SHNK
THANK GOD... I THOUGHT I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO HOLD A KITCHEN KNIFE AGAIN ...
I KNOW YOU'RE NERVOUS, BUT BABY STEPS.
YOU KNOW,
TIMES LIKE THESE REMIND ME...

...HOW NICE IT IS TO HAVE SOMEONE TO LEAN ON WHEN THINGS GET ROUGH.
JUST HAVING YOU WITH ME WAS REALLY REASSURING.
I'M GLAD YOU'RE MY BOYFRIEND ...
OH.
I GUESS YOU'RE MY "BROTHER" RIGHT NOW, HUH?
...BEEN LIKE YOU.
IF ONLY I COULD'VE ...
I FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT HER THE WAY YOU DO ABOUT YOUR GIRLFRIEND.
...OR GUYS, FOR THAT MATTER...
IF WE WERE BOTH GIRLS ...
...DO YOU THINK WE STILL WOULD'VE ENDED UP TOGETHER?
HIDDEN FEELINGS, MUCH LIKE OURS...
...BUT IN A DIFFERENT FORM.
HEY...

HMM.
THAT'S A TOUGH QUES-TION.
WE'RE NOT, SO I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE.
BUT ...
...WHEN I THINK BACK...
...ON EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED UNTIL NOW ...
...
I SEE.
...I THINK ...
...I STILL WOULD'VE FALLEN FOR YOU.
Y'THINK WE'D BE ABLE TO OPENLY GO ON DATES IF THAT WERE THE CASE?
I MEAN, IT MIGHT GIVE US PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY.

CAN I COME IN?
HUH ?
OH, SURE ...
コン KNOCK KNOCK
MIYABI.
IT'S OKAY.
I'M SORRY I BROKE DOWN.
SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT SCHOOL.
YOU WERE JUST TRYING TO HELP ME...
カチャ... CHACK
YUKA ...

I CAME ...
...TO SAY GOODBYE.
HUH ?
HONESTLY, I CONSIDERED BRUSHING IT OFF...
...AND ACTING LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED, BUT...
I JUST ...
...CAN'T REALLY TAKE IT ANYMORE.
I'VE ...
...ALWAYS LOVED YOU, MIYABI.

I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF YOUR TRUST.
IT WAS JUST AN EXCUSE.
SO, WHEN I SAID THAT KISS WAS JUST PRACTICE,
AND OF COURSE, I MEAN AS MORE THAN JUST A FRIEND.
WHEN I SAW YOU CRY...
I'M REALLY SORRY.
I DIDN'T THINK IT'D TURN OUT THAT WAY.
...I COULDN'T KEEP PRETENDING TO JUST BE YOUR FRIEND.
...I REAL-IZED ...
THANKS FOR EVERY-THING UNTIL NOW, MIYABI.
SHE COULD'VE JUST PLAYED IT OFF AND KEPT IT A SECRET...
I WONDER WHY KUSANAGI-SAN TOLD ME EVERY-THING.

IT KINDA SEEMED LIKE...
...SHE WAS AT THE END OF HER ROPE.
カチャ... CHACK
H-
HEY.
HOW'S IT GOING?
...
OH...
...
...
UHH...
SORRY ABOUT YESTERDAY.
I KINDA SHOWED UP AT A BAD TIME, HUH?
BUT KUSANAGI-SAN TOLD ME EVERYTHING.
YOU WERE PRACTICING FOR THE ROLE, RIGHT?
I WAS A LITTLE SURPRISED, BUT IT MADE SENSE AFTER SHE EXPLAINED IT.
I FIGURED GIVEN HOW STOIC YOU ARE, THAT WAS NO BIG-
TAP

...ZAWA?
SERI...
To be continued.